(b) whether any progress has been made in this area;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) In the sea bed off the coast of Maharashtra State, which form part of Mumbai offshore basin, covering both shallow water and deep water areas, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) holds Petroleum Exploration Licenses (PELs) for 12 blocks, 10 in shallow water and 2 in deepwater, on nomination basis and 5 blocks, 3 in shallow water and 2 in deepwater, awarded under various rounds of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

(b) to (d) ONGC has acquired 28,886 Line Kilometer (LK) of Two-dimensional (2-D) and 8,929 square kilometer of Three-dimensional (3-D) seismic data and has drilled 33 'exploration' wells in above PEL areas during the last three years. Further in the year 2003-04 (till 30.6.2003), ONGC has drilled 3 more wells. Out of the total 36 'exploration' wells drilled, 11 wells are oil and 5 are gas bearing. Also 7 wells gave indications of oil and gas. These exploratory efforts resulted in five new finds and an accretion of 95.77 Million Metric Tonne (MMT) (Oil+Oil Equivalent Gas) of ultimate reserves.

Import of LNG from IRAN

†961. SHRI R.P. GOENKA:
SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have signed a pact with Iran for import of some five million tones of Liquified Natural Gas (LNG) and Government have offered to extend their expertise in refinery upgradation and technology for automotive CNG;

(b) if so, the detail thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the commercial terms of the LNG imports have not yet been worked out; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and its present status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) An MoU has been signed in January, 2003 between the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India and Ministry of Petroleum Government of Islamic Republic of Iran for cooperation in Hydrocarbon Sector including import of LNG from Iran to India, assistance in refinery revamp, development of CNG in Iran etc.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Keeping in view the national interest and to obtain best possible terms, the terms and conditions require in depth examination and entail protracted negotiations between the oil companies of both the countries.

Dispute in exploration of Oil in Jaisalmer

†962. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether digging is going on in Myal Jar area due to the possibility of huge reserves of oil and gas in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan;

(b) whether there is any dispute between ONGC and Rashtriya Maru Udhyan regarding this project;

(c) if so, the action taken by Government to get the project completed and to end the dispute; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No drilling is underway today in Maijalar area in Jaisalmer basin of the State of Rajasthan.

(b) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has identified an exploratory location for drilling a well to assess the hydrocarbon potential of Miajalar area. However, the proposed drill site and part of the approach road fall within the Desert National Park (DNP) area and permission for drilling a well is not available to ONGC.

(c) and (d) ONGC had filed a writ petition with Hon'ble Supreme Court, for grant of permission to work in the DNP and the matter is under consideration in terms of Hon'ble Supreme Court's orders.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.